

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 01225 071008Z

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SCCT-01 CU-02 SAM-01 /058 W

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R 070717Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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BEIRUT PASS USINT BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, IR

SUBJ: MASSIVE ANTI-IRANIAN DEMONSTRATIONS IN IRAQ

1. FARSI AND FOREIGN-LANGUAGE PRESS FEBRUARY 4-6 CARRIED REPORTS OF WIDESPREAD ANTI-IRANIAN DEMONSTRATIONS IN BAGHDAD AND OTHER IRAQI CITIES. VITRIOLIC CHARACTER OF ANTI-IRANIAN PROPAGANDA IS CHARACTERIZED HERE AS QTE SHCOK TREATMENT UNQTE AND BEGINNING OF NEW IRAQI DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL OFFENSIVE INTENDED TO TAKE PEOPLES' MINDS OFF FAILURE OF KURDISH WAR AND LESSEN IRAQI ISOLATION IN ARAB WORLD BY PORTRAYING IRAQ AS ARAB CHAMPION AGAINST IRANIAN IMPERIALISM. ACCORDING TO IRAQI RADIO REPORT HEARD BY AMCONSUL KHORRAMSHAHR, RALLIES WERE SPONSORED BY ORGANIZATION OF PROFESSIONALS AND PEOPLE SUPPORTING IRAQ AGAINST REACTIONISM OF IRAN AND IMPERIALISTS. DEMONSTRATIONS WERE LENT AN AIR OF OFFICIAL SANCTION BY HALF-HOUR TV PROGRAM AND PRESENCE AT PUBLIC MEETINGS OF VICE PRESIDENT SADDAM HUSSEIN. INCIDENTS APPARENTLY WERE TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH GATHERING IN BAGHDAD OF REPRESENTATIVES OF VARIOUS RADICAL AND SUBVERSIVE GROUPS OPERATING IN PERSAIN GULF REGION INCLUDING, ACCORDING TO IRAQI RADIO, AHWAZ LIBERATION FRONT, KURDISH DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN IRAN (SIC), WESTERN BALCUH-ISTAN LIBERATION FRONT, OMAN LIBERATION FRONT, AND NATIONAL

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IRANIAN PEACE COMMITTEE. REPRESENTATIVES FROM KUWAIT, BAHRAIN,

JORDAN, MOROCCO, AND YEMEN AS WELL AS GEORGE HABASH FROM PALESTINIANS ALSO WERE ALLEGEDLY PRESENT.

2. IRANIAN REPORTS CLAIM UNWILLING POPULACE WAS TRUCKED TO SCENE OF RALLIES BY IRAQI MILITARY AND THAT SHIA RELIGIOUS LEADERS WERE FORCED TO TAKE PART UNDER THREAT OF IMPRISONMENT. INCIDENTS WERE SAID TO BE CHARACTERIZED BY EXTENSIVE AND ABUSIVE PROPAGANDA SIMILAR TO THAT NORMALLY DIRECTED AGAINST AN ENEMY IN WARTIME. HIGH LEVEL IRANIAN SECURITY OFFICIAL HAS INDICATED TO EMBASSY OFFICER THAT US AND ISRAEL WERE ALSO TARGETS OF SIMILAR PROPAGANDA DURING DEMONSTRATIONS.

3. IRANIAN PRESS WHICH REFLECTS OFFICIAL GOI VIEWPOINT REGARDS DEMONSTRATIONS AS PROOF THAT IRAQIS NEVER INTENDED ISTANBUL NEGOTIATIONS TO SUCCEED AND CLAIMS THAT PREPARATIONS FOR RALLIES WERE UNDERWAY WHILE FOREIGN MINISTERS WERE MEETING IN TURKEY. ONE ARTICLE PREDICTS IRAQI ATTACK ON IRANIAN EMBASSY BAGHDAD. LOCAL EDITORIALS STRESS MEASURED NATURE OF TEHRAN'S RESPONSE AND REPEAT THEME THAT IRANIAN INACTION DOES NOT STEM FROM FEAR OR WEAKNESS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TEHRAN01225
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750045-0439
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750260/aaaaccgp.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 AUG 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <26 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MASSIVE ANTI-IRANIAN DEMONSTRATIONS IN IRAQ
TAGS: PFOR, IZ, IR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006